



US Army Corps of Engineers

Norfolk District

News Release

Contact Gerald Rogers or Diana Bailey
Phone: (757) 441-7673

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 30, 2002

CORPS CONTINUES MOSQUITO CONTROL PLAN

The Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District, continues to do their part in fighting recent mosquito infestations throughout Hampton Roads. An active program is ongoing at Craney Island to keep the area's mosquito population down.

The facility has full time staff dedicated to managing the site and removing standing water. Drying the inactive dredged material storage cells creates more volume for storing material and also reduces the potential for mosquito population growth. Dewatering is important for both of these reasons.

In addition to grading and ditching to remove standing water, the staff places larvicides regularly on the site where appropriate. Purple Martin houses have been installed since these birds eat mosquitoes. They have also coordinated mosquito control aerial spraying by the United States Air Force. The spray area includes Craney Island, Navy and Coast Guard property (including surrounding marshes), and extends about one mile south of Craney Island.

The next aerial spraying is scheduled between October 7 and 10. The U.S. Air Force was unable to accelerate this spraying because of other commitments, including West Nile Virus outbreaks elsewhere and national defense responsibilities.

For the future, several initiatives are under way to improve the mosquito control program. This October, a scientist from the Corps' Environmental Research Laboratory in Vicksburg, Miss., will visit Craney Island to review its current program. The Corps will also join with the City of Portsmouth to hire a consultant to review mosquito control programs. Purchase of a low ground pressure excavator to help remove more standing water from inside the site is also planned .

#